

COOPERATIVE STRUCTURES FOR ASKING QUESTIONS

Cooperative structures provide directions for student interaction. Once students have learned the procedure for a particular structure, the teacher can give interactive directions quickly just by naming the structure. The following structures are applicable for asking questions.

THINK-PAIR-SHARE

Uses:

To ask and answer questions where there are no correct answers: opinions, predictions, reactions, personal experiences, etc. (or) questions with more than one correct answer. Use when all students would be able to answer from prior knowledge or would have options from which to choose. Do not use Think-pair-share for questions where several students would be unable to share an answer. (Pair a non-English speaker with a bilingual partner who can speak his/her language if possible. The bilingual speaker can share his/her partners answers.)



Steps of the structure (The simplest structure to teach.)

1. Teacher/students asks a question while the rest of the class listens.
2. Students are given at least seven seconds think time.
3. Students pair with a designated partner (the person next to them or across from them.)
4. Designated students share answers with the whole class.

Variations:

Think-pair-share partner's answer.

Think-pair-square (Students share with their teammates only.)

Think-write-share (Students write their answers first, then share.)

Think-build-share (Students build individually to solve a problem, then share with the team.)

Examples:

What are the people doing in this picture? What do you think is happening in this picture?

How do you think _____ will feel about _____?

What do you know about _____? What would you like to know about _____?

How do you feel about _____ and why?

What _____ do you feel is the most important _____ and why?

What would you do if _____? (or) What do you think will happen if _____?

How do you think _____ is used in the real world?

Do you think _____ should or should not _____? Why do you think so?

How would you relate _____ to your own life?

Tell your partner about a personal experience with _____?

How might _____ solve the problem? (or) How might _____ affect _____?

What do you think would be the most effective graphic organizer for recording this information?

Explain your answer.

How is _____ similar to (or different than) _____?

Which words on this list describe _____?

Can you identify connections among 2 or more words on the list? Explain the connection.

Can you think of words that _____ (synonyms/antonyms/+ or – connotations etc.)?

Can you find words on the list that rhyme with _____ (have a specific sound, etc.)

What words/phrases on the list do you think are examples of _____?

What were things we used (actions we did) yesterday when we _____?

Which numbers/equations are examples of _____?

What do you think is the most confusing part of this problem?

What is an important rule for _____?

NUMBERED-HEADS-TOGETHER

Use:

To ask and answer more difficult questions. Try to ask larger multiple-part questions, or questions where many students would need assistance.

Steps of the structure:

1. Students number off in teams of four. (Keep the same number as long as the team will continue to work together, possibly four weekends.)
2. The teacher/student asks a question.
3. Team members put their heads together and make sure that everyone in the team can answer the question.
4. The teacher/student calls the number, and those with that number stand and participate in answering the question.



Examples: Put your heads together and prepare to:

Explain the process of _____/list the steps of _____.

Be prepared to identify all the _____ in the room/in a picture.

Be able to demonstrate through visuals/manipulatives understanding of _____.

Be able to give three similarities and three differences between _____ and _____.

Identify and explain the relationships between _____ and _____ (could be more than two).

Explain the functions of the individual parts of _____.

Identify the main idea and three supportive details in this paragraph.

Write the main idea of this passage/the theme of this story.

Be ready to tell three important facts about _____/ assumptions being made.

Identify three causes of _____ and try to rank their importance.

Solve the math problem and be able to explain each step.

Give the definition of _____ and give at least three examples.

Define _____ and use it in a sentence.

Label the parts of this diagram _____/identify the component parts of _____.

Identify 4 advantages/disadvantages of _____. How would you argue for/against _____?

Write at least one example of _____ (smile, metaphor, personification, complex sentence, sentence with a practical phrase).

State the essential problem _____ and identify possible consequences of the problem.

Restate the sequence of events in this passage/story.

Skim the chapter and prepare to tell as much information as you can about it.

What would be a really good first sentence for our Language Experience Story?

Identify at least three ways the author supported his/her opinion.

What strategies did _____ use to solve the problem?

If you were going to use a graphic organizer to record the information in this passage, which would you use and why?

What implications do you predict _____ would have?

What four aspects of comparison would be the most important to include on your matrix comparing and contrasting _____.

Identify three strategies that the author used to _____?

How might _____ view this story/historical event from a different perspective?

Based on what you know about _____ how might that person/group evaluate _____?

If you were going to write about _____ how would you organize the writing?

ROUND ROBIN

Uses

To answer questions where there are multiple answers and where each student would be able to contribute. Because Round Robin is oral, and the teacher will not hear the answers, it is important to ask questions where incorrect answers would be unlikely or very easy for teammates to clarify for each other. Class sharing is critical for the harder questions.

Steps of the structure



1. Students work in teams of four. (Each student has a number.)
2. The teacher/student asks a question with multiple answers and students think of possible answers.
3. Students take turns orally sharing one answer at a time.
4. Students continue taking turns until time is called. If a team member is not ready when it is his/her turn, the person simply says, "I'm still thinking."
5. When time is up, the teacher/student calls a number and those students from each team stand and share some of their ideas. (It is often helpful to have all students repeat the answers or repeat and record single words. This step is not always necessary.)

Variations

Provide additional prompts for younger students. For example, students pass around the object, a pencil or small flag that says "your turn" as they take turns. When asking them to Round Robin retell a story, the teacher might turn pages in a big book and the students take turns telling about the pages that are visible.

Round Robin Classification

Students take turns describing pictures (or reading sentences, fragments, clauses, phrases, words, word problems etc. and placing them on a graphic organizer (or in designated categories). Each student asks, "Do you agree." Team members signal: thumbs up if yes, sideways if unsure, thumbs down if no. The contributing student gets feedback from any student who disagrees. Note because the teacher would be able to assess the placement of the items, this form of Round Robin could be used with harder tasks where the team may make some errors.

Examples:

Round Robin examples of _____.

Round Robin what you know/want to know about _____.

Round Robin retell the story/summarize the main points of a reading.

Round Robin restate the directions before you begin.

Round Robin what you learned today.

Round Robin ways to _____/ rules for _____.

Round Robin suggestions to _____/ impressions of _____.

Round Robin follow the story plot guidelines and make up a story.

Round Robin consequences of a problem/ important considerations of/pros or cons.

Round Robin your observations of _____/experiences with _____.

Round Robin classify pictures of _____ (words etc) on a Web Diagram/Venn Diagram (or sequence pictures or events on a Sequence chart).

Round Robin rank pictures/words on a continuum based on _____ (one aspect of comparison).

Round Robin classify math problems/words etc. into the following categories _____.

STAND AND SHARE

The teacher/student asks a question similar to those for Round Robin (multiple answers, easy enough for all students). Students all stand up. The teacher/student calls on one person to answer. Anyone ready to share that answer sits down. This continues until all students are seated. (Note: Do not ask a question where everyone in the room would have a different answer or everyone would have to share.)

VARIATION: Continue standing as long as you have something to add. Examples for variation: What did you learn today? What were important ideas from the reading/your homework? Give suggestions for solving a problem. What are writing skills we've learned? What questions do you think will be on the test? (Student volunteers answer each question.)

ROUND TABLE

Steps of the structure are identical to Round Robin with one exception. Students say and write the answer rather than simply saying it. Each team has one piece of paper. They pass it around the team and take turns contributing answers.

Uses:

To generate examples, and answer questions with multiple answers. Use rather than Round Robin when accuracy is important or if students tend to be off-task during Round Robin. Do not use for tasks that take too much time. For example, do not have students write complete sentences. For increased language development it is helpful when relevant to say a complete sentence but record only the most significant word/s.

Variations:

Simultaneous Roundtable: Students don't say their contributions and all students are writing at the same time. They continue to contribute until time is called to pass the paper. For example: Students contribute to four different lists related to: parts of speech, sentence types, characteristics of a topic of study, and so forth. This may be done prior to study, for example, listing what they know about characteristics of a Native American tribe: food, clothes, shelter, and work. They save the lists and after studying the tribe, cross off any incorrect information and then simultaneous roundtable what they learned.

Students may do what is also called "write around". They each start a story. Then when time is called, pass their stories to the right and continue the story. They continue changing partners as time is called until the paper returns to the original writer who makes the last contribution to the story. (Story plot prompts may be used to assure that critical story elements are present.)

Simultaneously record answers on a large graphic organizer with room for all team members to write at once.

Examples:

Roundtable examples of _____ (verbs, prime numbers, polygons, words that rhyme with "cat", energy sources, causes of pollution, human rights, words related to Spring, etc.)

Roundtable characteristics of _____ (the main character, sound, communities, software, a historical period, a type of art or music, etc.)

Roundtable important people from _____.

Roundtable contributions of _____.

Roundtable vocabulary/essential concepts you will need to know for the test.

Roundtable steps in a process/phrases in a life circle.